

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated September 7, 2006, Applicants provide the following remarks to address the issues cited by the Examiner.

By this amendment, claims 11, 14, 15, 18 and 19 have been amended, claim 21-23 have been added and no claims have been cancelled; therefore, claims 11-23 are currently pending in the present application. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been introduced by this amendment, as support therefor is found throughout the specification and drawings. In view of the above amendment and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that claims 11-23 are allowable.

The Examiner has objected to claims 11 and 14-15 for the informalities cited in paragraph 1 of the office action. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claims 11 and 14-15 to correct said informalities and place the objected claims in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of these objections is respectfully requested.

Claims 18-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, Applicants have amended claims 18-19 and added new claims 21-23 to correct the indefinite range citations noted in paragraph 3 of the office action. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-20 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by McLain (U.S. Pat. No. 3,422,008). The Examiner's grounds for rejection are hereinafter traversed, and reconsideration is respectfully requested, particularly in view of the clarifying amendments to the claims.

McLain does not teach or suggest a hollow fiber fluid separation module, wherein each fiber is laid down during winding with a tensile strain of at least 10 g, as recited in amended claim 11; in fact, McLain is completely silent with respect to tensile strain. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion in McLain with respect to fiber deformation, which is also recited in claim 11. To the contrary, McLain teaches maintaining circular (unrestricted) fiber cross sections by minimizing the contact area between adjacent fibers (see, for example, McLain col. 4, lines 53-59). Such a result can only be obtained if the fibers are not deformed. In direct contradistinction, the present invention teaches to positively deform the fibers and obtain a larger contact area between adjacent fibers.

The teaching of McLain to avoid large contact areas between adjacent fibers is further exemplified in figures 5 and 6, which show the application of an epoxy resin between adjacent crossing fibers to impart desired adhesion and strength characteristics to the fibers (McLain, col. 13, lines 40-43). The present invention does not require the application of an epoxy resin between adjacent fibers because of the larger contact area between adjacent fibers. This larger contact area is obtained by winding the fibers under the abovementioned strain and deforming the fibers due to said strain.

Applicants respectfully submit that amended claim 11 patenably distinguishes over McLain, as McLain does not teach, suggest or otherwise disclose each and every element of the claimed invention. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 11-20, which depend directly from claim 11 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 11, patenably distinguish over McLain. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that new claims 21-23, which depend directly from claim 11 and incorporate all of the limitations of claim 11, patenably distinguish over McLain and are allowable therefor.

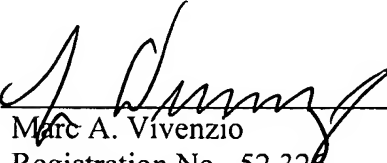
For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early action to that effect is earnestly solicited. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicant's attorney would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is cordially requested to telephone the undersigned.

In the event of a fee deficiency or if a petition for an extension of time is required, please consider this a petition for an extension of time therefor, and authorization for the Commissioner to charge any additional fees, including extension fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-3569.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: January 8, 2007

By: _____


Marc A. Vivenzio
Registration No. 52,326
Attorney for Applicants

PTO Correspondence Address:

McCarter & English, LLP
CityPlace I, 185 Asylum Street
Hartford, CT 06103
Phone: (860) 275-7055
Fax: (860) 724-3997